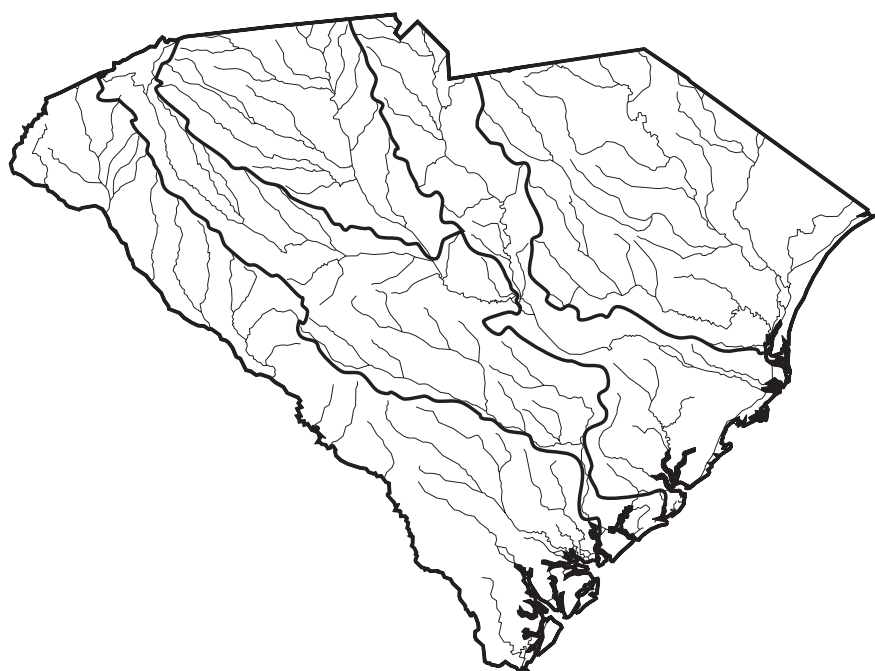


South Carolina



— Basin Boundaries
(USGS 6-Digit Hydrologic Unit)

For a copy of the South Carolina 1996 305(b) report, contact:

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Surface Water Quality

Eighty-seven percent of surveyed rivers, 92% of surveyed lakes, and 68% of estuaries have good water quality that fully supports aquatic life uses. Fifty-three percent of rivers, 100% of lakes, and 89% of estuaries fully support swimming. Unsuitable water quality is responsible for shellfish harvesting prohibitions in only 2% of the State's coastal shellfish waters. Another 11% of shellfish waters are closed as a precaution due to potential pollution from nearby marinas or point source discharges.

Bacteria are the most frequent cause of impairment (i.e., partial or nonsupport of designated uses) in rivers and streams; metals are the most frequent cause of impairment in lakes, but only 8% of lakes do not fully support uses; and low dissolved oxygen is the most frequent cause of impairment in estuaries. Toxic contaminants do not appear to be a widespread problem in South Carolina surface waters.

Ground Water Quality

Overall ground water quality remains excellent, although the number of reported ground water contamination cases rose from 60 cases in 1980 to 3,330 cases in 1997. The increase in the number of contaminated sites is primarily due to expanded monitoring at underground storage tank sites. Leaking underground storage tanks are the most common source of contamination, impacting 2,767 sites, followed by spills and leaking pits, ponds, and lagoons.

Programs to Restore Water Quality

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) initiated a Watershed Water Quality Management Strategy (WWQMS) to integrate monitoring, assessment, problem identification and prioritization, water quality modeling, planning, permitting, and other management activities by river drainage basins. DHEC

has delineated five major drainage basins encompassing 280 minor watersheds. Every year, DHEC will develop or revise a management plan and implementation strategy for one basin. The majority of water quality activities in these watersheds will be based on a 5-year rotation. The basin strategies will refocus water quality protection and restoration priorities for allocation of limited resources.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

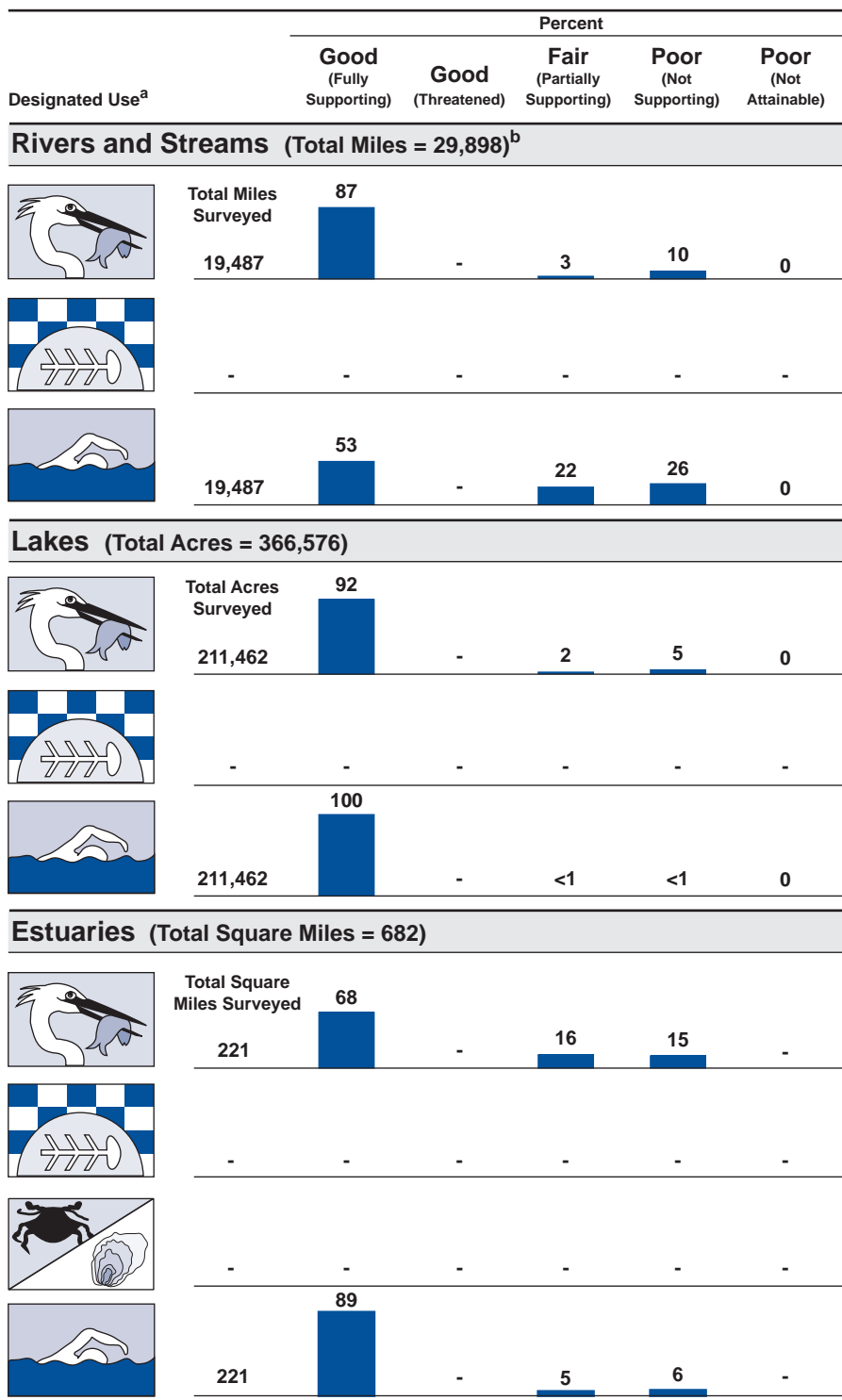
Year round, DHEC samples chemical and physical parameters monthly at fixed primary stations located in or near high-use waters. DHEC samples secondary stations (near discharges and areas with a history of water quality problems) monthly from May through October for fewer parameters. Each year, DHEC adds new watershed stations within the specific basin under investigation. Watershed stations are sampled monthly for 1 year corresponding with the WWQMS schedule.

– Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

^a A subset of South Carolina's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the State's 305(b) report for a full description of the State's uses.

^b Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.

Individual Use Support in South Carolina



Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.